



Laughing Man



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Chapter 1 by Shae

The Laughing Man is a scary story about two men who go into the jungles of Africa and try to trap a rare species of ape. It is based on an old horror comic that appeared in Creepy #95.

The Laughing Man

There was a doctor who worked in a remote village in Africa. He was the only white person for miles and he had spent half his life taking care of the local villagers, providing them with medical care and medicine.

One day, a white man stumbled into the village. He could barely walk, but he was laughing like a maniac.

“Ha Ha Ha... Hee Hee Hee... Ha Ha Ha...”

His clothes were tattered and torn and his hands and knees were covered in blood. His eyes were wild and he looked exhausted. It seemed like he was out of his mind.

The doctor gave him some water and tended to his wounds, but the man couldn't stop

laughing.

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The Laughing Man

The man slept for hours and when he woke up, the doctor gave him some food and tried to find out how he had come to be there.

“What happened to you?” the doctor asked. “What are you doing all alone out here in the jungle?”

“I wasn’t alone,” the laughing man replied. “I came with my partner Jack Hunter. We were on an expedition to find the legendary Wahki... That’s what the locals call them... A rare species of ape... The Africans say they’re intelligent apes... almost as intelligent as a human... maybe even more intelligent... We wanted to capture one and bring it back to civilization to put it on display. It was supposed to make us very rich...”

“We tried to hire a guide to take us into the valley of the apes, but none of the locals dared to go there. They were afraid of the apes. We weren’t going to let that stop us, so we bought a canoe and headed down the river on our own.”

The Laughing Man

“When we came to the valley of the apes, we made camp. Hunter unpacked the traps and set them up in a clearing in the jungle. We hid in the bushes and watched those traps for three whole days, but we caught nothing. The apes were too smart for us. They knew what we were up to. They weren’t going to fall for simple traps.”

“Hunter had a better idea. We dug a pit in the clearing. It was 10 feet deep and filled with sharp wooden spikes. Then, we covered it over with branches and leaves and went back to our camp to wait.”

“We didn’t have to wait very long. In the middle of the night, we heard a loud scream. A horrible, gurgling animal scream. We rushed out to check on the pit and found a dead ape, impaled on the sharp wooden spikes.”

The Laughing Man

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“We dragged the corpse of the dead ape out of the pit and found it was a dead ape, not a live one.”

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"I tried to talk him out of it, but there was no reasoning with him. Nothing I could say would dissuade him. He took out a knife and started skinning the ape's body. As he worked, I nervously watched the jungle around us. It was dark, but I could feel the eyes of the other apes watching us. I couldn't shake the creeping fear that they knew we had killed one of them and the rest would come to take revenge. When Hunter finished skinning the ape, he put on it's skin and wore it like a costume."

The Laughing Man

"We removed the sharp wooden spikes from the pit and placed a big log across it. Disguised in his ape costume, Hunter balanced on the log and I covered the pit up with branches and leaves again. His plan was to trick one of the other apes into coming closer, so it would fall into the trap. He crouched there on the log and waited while I went back to our camp."

The Laughing Man

"It was almost dawn and I was just about to doze off, when I heard the scream. I rushed out to check the pit, but it was empty and my friend Hunter was nowhere to be seen. I called out his name, but there was no reply. I searched for hours, but I could find no trace of him. I was about to give up hope, when I spotted a figure in the jungle."

"It was Hunter. He was crouched down under a tree, naked as the day he was born and he was just staring at me with a blank look on his face."

The Laughing Man

"Hunter!" I cried. "Good Lord! What happened to you? I thought you were dead. Why didn't you answer me?"

"Hunter didn't say a word. Slowly, he rose to his feet and he just stood there staring at me. And then... Ha Ha Ha... and then... Hee Hee Hee... and then... He took it off... Ha Ha Ha... Hee Hee Hee..."

The man was shaking and laughing so much, he could barely control himself. His body was wracked by spasms of madness.

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"What do you mean?" the doctor asked. "What did he like?"

Giggling like a maniac, the doctor said, "He liked it."

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“Ha Ha Ha... Hee Hee Hee... He took it off... Ha Ha Ha... The ape took off Hunter’s skin!”

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